GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2921
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2017
Hubli-Ankola Rail Line
Mullappally Shri Ramachandran

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether final clearance has been obtained for the Hubli-Ankola Railway line and if so, the details thereof;
(b) the terms, if any, stipulated by the Environment Ministry for proceeding with the project;
(c) the extent of forest land estimated to be affected by the project; and
(d) the steps proposed to be taken to protect and preserve the Tiger Reserves on this route?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2921 BY SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 02.08.2017 REGARDING HUBLI-ANKOLA RAIL LINE

(a) to (d): Hubli-Ankola new line project is held up on account of forestry clearances. In this regard, revised proposal for diversion of 595.64 Ha forest land was submitted to Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEF & CC) by Government of Karnataka vide their letter dated 24.10.2016 with a request to obtain and communicate (Stage-I) approval of Government of India under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The eighteenth meeting of Regional Empowered Committee (REC) was held on 05.05.2017 and examined the proposal as well as the site inspection report of committee. After due deliberations, the REC informed the State Government/User Agency to submit detailed remarks on site inspection report, current objectives of proposed Railway line for examining the project on similar lines as the set objectives, cost benefit analysis which also should include the cost involved in transport through alternative routes and also by alternate mode of transportation.

Detailed remarks for the site inspection report, current objectives of proposed line, detailed cost benefit analysis were submitted to MOEF & CC, Southern Zone through Government of Karnataka vide letter dated 05.06.2017 and 15.06.2017. Nineteenth Meeting of REC was held on 10.07.2017. The REC examined the essential details furnished by the State Government and Railways again in response to decision taken in earlier meetings with regard to the objectives the project, cost benefit analysis, alternatives examined, revised details of enumeration of trees to be felled, Compensatory Afforestation etc. After detailed deliberations on the above issues, the REC recommended the project, subject to the following conditions as communicated by MOEF & CC/Regional Office/Bangalore vide letter dated 11.07.2017:-

(i) The user agency to strive for increasing the number of tunnels (from suggested 25) and viaducts.
(ii) User agency should revise mitigation plan in consultation with the Forest department including more number of under passes.
(iii) It is seen that the alignment passes through Bedthi Conservation Reserve, Hombill Conservation Reserve, overlapping Buffer Zone area of Anshi-Dandeli Tiger Reserve and Elephant Corridors. User agency should submit appropriate proposal for consideration by the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife.
(iv) Hard copies of the enumeration list of trees to be felled to contain species-wise, girth-wise details which shall be submitted by the Karnataka Forest Department.
(v) The Compensatory Afforestation scheme to be prepared in detail clearly mentioning the degraded area or other revenue land surrendered by Kudremukh Project.
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